Oswald Could Have Killed, an MD Finds

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By JAY LEVIN

The relentlessscrutiny of John Kennedy's assassination goes on, and today an expert on the criminal mind has added his view, one favorable to the findings of the Warren Commission.

After nearly two years spent examining the life of Lee Harvey Oswald, psychiatrist Dr. David Abrahamsen has concluded that the slim and dark ex-Marine with the hollow eyes and bemused smile was indeed a murderer.

Accepts Findings

He does not argue that Oswald, as the Warren Commission asserts, was indisputedly the assassin, though he accepts the Commission's finding. Rather he is convinced from comparing the sexual experience, character traits and behavior of Oswald with the nearly 1,000 murders whom he has studied that Oswald had a mind that could, in one wild, irrational, impulsive moment, kill a man; Oswald had the mind of a murder wald had the mind of a murderer.

Dr Abrahamsen, now of Brandeis University, formerly of Columbia, and a frequent court witness on criminal insanity, put forth this opinion last night at a meeting here of the Assn. for the Advancement of Psychotherapy.

Oswald, he said, had exhibited many of the same personality traits of the murderers he had studied: Narcism, egoism, suspiciousness, contempt for authority, cruelty, impulsiveness, withdrawal, hostility. Like them, too, he had endured the psychologically jarring experience of being privy to his parents' sexual acts when young; he had, according to Warren Commission evidence, slept with his mother, Marquerite, until almost 11 and during a period when she was married to her third husband, Edwin Ekdahl.

Not a Little Boy

The man who murders, Abrahamsen asserted, does so to counter a sense of helplessness, to proclaim his power. In Freudian terms, "It's to show his mother he's not a little boy." Such helplessness he said, such a feeling of insignificance, spurs a man to vengefulness and withdrawal.

How did this make Lee Harvey Oswald a murderer?

Until he was 3, Abrahamsen said, Oswald's sole parental image was his mother, his father having died two months before he was born. When she remarried, he felt "guilt and fear and hate" over the intruder in his mother's bed, subsequently identifying with his mother and expeirencing a weaened sens of his own masculinity.

To overcome his sense of helplessness, he was later to be an exhibitionist, wearing too big clothes and spelling and spelling "yonuge" for young. To counter his feeling of insignificance, he was to identify in his fantasis with dictators men who had the power to act out their aggressions

Spoiled excessively as a child, Abrahamsen asserted, Oswald was ever filled with the notion tht he was a man others should think important. When no one in the U.S. did, he went off to Russia, expecting it to welcome "him with open arms like a loving parent." Ultimately, he was rejected there too:

At the time he allegedly killed Kennedy, Abrahamsen said, he had gone through a relentless period of rejections. He was fired from jobs, not allowed to enter Cuba, spurned by his wife, Marina, the night before the assassination.

So, "obsessed with vengefulness and with proving his own power," wanting to command attention and control events, determined to show Russia it had erred in rejecting him, and expecting to "return in acclaim," he shot Kennedy—the symbol of American power, the father figure.

Listening to Abrahamsen speak last night was City Corporation Counsel J. Lee Rankin, who was general counsel to the Warren Commission. Two psychiatrists who had assisted the Commission's investigations, he said, had also offered opinions on Oswald's capacity for murder. "Many of the things Dr. Abrahamsen presented" he said, "impressed us at the time of the investigation."

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